

photos by William M. Plate Jr.



Modifications inside a mortuary transfer vehicle (left) at Dover Air Force Base, Del., include rails to help guide transfer cases onto the rollers and bars to hold the doors open when the wind blows. Airmen from the 436th Equipment



Maintenance Squadron redesigned the vehicle to increase the capacity from two to six transfer cases before the metals technology shop, including Airman 1st Class Jonathan Trammell (right), made the modifications.

Airmen remodel mortuary vehicle

DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del.

— When service members die on foreign soil, their remains are transported here to the Charles C. Carson Center for Mortuary Affairs where workers prepare the fallen troops for their final resting places.

To help in the most solemn of Dover's missions, Airmen from the 436th Equipment Maintenance Squadron's fabrication flight finished remodeling a mortuary transfer vehicle to increase its capacity from two transfer cases to six.

Mortuary officials requested bids from local businesses to remodel the vehicle, but when the bids came in

at nearly \$6,000, Tech. Sgt. **Thomas DiCuirci** of the unit's metals technology shop said his section could complete it at a lower cost. He called on the specialists in his shop and Airmen from the 436th and 512th airlift wings here, plus workers from the 439th Maintenance Squadron at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., and came up with an initial plan.

The contributions from each section not only saved the Air Force nearly \$4,000, but resulted in many modifications such as stops on the rollers, locks at the end of the rollers, rails to help guide the transfer cases onto the rollers and bars to

hold the doors open during strong winds.

Airmen from fabrication flights often don't see how their work affects a wartime mission. However, news reports of service members dying gave new meaning to their work. With this motivation, they completed the project in only six weeks.

"I'm proud of what we accomplished with [remodeling] the truck, but I'm also sorry that we need it in the first place," said Tech. Sgt. **Terry Willis** of the 512th Equipment Maintenance Squadron.

— Airman 1st Class Brian Stives
436th Airlift Wing Public Affairs